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THE ANCESTRY

OF

PRESIDENT HARDING

[illegible]

HARDINGS OF WYOMING VALLEY

AND

CLIFFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

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[illegible]

THE ANCESTRY

OF

PRESIDENT HARDING

AND ITS RELATION TO THE

HARDINGS OF WYOMING VALLEY

AND

CLIFFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

BY

CLARA GARDNER MILLER

PREPRINT FROM

PROCEEDINGS AND COLLECTIONS OF THE
WYOMING HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
VOLUME XXI.

1576687

To The Honorable Court to be Holden at Tunkhannock in and for the County of Luzerne on the Third monday in August Instant Comes your Honours humble Petitioners and Begs Leave To inform your Honours That on running a East Line from the mouth of Meshopin it Appears to be in the South of Us and of Course we Cannot belong to The Township of Tunkhannock and the Situation of The County Deprives us of most Inestimable Privileges That our fellow Citizens Enjoy In giving our votes in Elections as The Distance is at Least forty miles The nearest way Over yet Occupied as a Road We therefore Humbly Pray That your Honours would take The matter aforesaid into your Wise Consideration and grant us Relief by Setting Us off as a Seperate Township bounded on the South by the North line of The Township of Tunkhannock and on the East West and North as in your Wisdom be found most Proper and your Honours Humble Petitioners as in Duty bound Shall ever Pray

Thos Bellamy April 1791

Isaiah Hatfield
Benjamin Collver
Israel Green
Thos Sleeper
Joseph Green
Samuel Cornelius
Samuel Cory
Benjamin Lister
Henry Williams
Isaiah Lister
Elias Bartlett
Daniel Collver
Ebenezer Stephens
Jesse Collver
John Sage
Joseph Hatfield
Thos Robinson
Samuel Hatfield
Abraham Terry
Joseph Allen

Petition for the erection of Nicholson Township. (See page 27).

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PREFACE.

The following article on the ancestors of President Harding has been prepared by Mrs. Clara Gardner Miller, "to give a comprehensive view of them and to correct some of the false records, of his near ancestors, with which the country was flooded during the years of his presidency."

Mrs. Miller's residence and wide acquaintance in Clifford and the Wyoming Valley and her experience as a genealogist make the work a genuine contribution to American genealogy, and as such, the Society takes pleasure in presenting it in this form, as a preprint from volume 21 of its Proceedings and Collections.

FRANCES DORRANCE, Director.

THE ANCESTRY OF PRESIDENT HARDING

The interest in genealogy which has been growing in this country for a generation, was greatly stimulated by the World War. Patriotism was brought out of hiding during that struggle and given an airing that proved an incentive to many people to seek admission to membership in patriotic societies. As many of these societies are entered only through family descent, the proof of which is required, the natural result has been a search for ancestors and a study of history sometimes made by those ancestors, that has proved as absorbing to the searcher as cross word puzzles or "ask me another".

Almost universally, this interest in pedigree hunting is a self-centered one, the seeker caring only for his own lineage and interesting himself in no other. A peculiar and striking exception to this was shown during the presidential campaign of 1920, when, seemingly, the whole country was reading the many articles published concerning the ancestors of the Republican standard bearer. As no such interest was shown in the Democratic candidate, we conclude that our people, just emerged from the horrors of war, were in a peculiarly receptive mood to the romantic and tragic Revolutionary war histories of certain members of the Harding family made prominent in these stories.

Genealogists, genealogical societies, magazines and newspapers all entered the field, giving widely different family records; and we had the spectacle of people who never before dreamed of bearing relationship to the Hardings, claiming at least kinship by marriage and frantically searching for proof of the same. Even towns were not exempt from the craze which lasted until after the death of President Harding. One notable case was that of a town in Connecticut which probably never had a resident ancestor of the President within its boundaries, claiming that a certain Nathan Harding

who once lived there was his grandfather. This town, on the strength of its historical mistake, held a special memorial service, August 10, 1923, at which addresses were made by several distinguished men. The State of Vermont also put forth claims similar to this Connecticut town and issued a family record differing from all others.

One genealogist professed to trace the unbroken lineage of the American branch of the Hardings from Canute, the Dane, who ruled England early in the eleventh century, and named many illustrious men as he carried the line down through the centuries to the present time. As he gave authorities for some of his statements, the record as compiled by him may be as true as such records usually are. The entire absence of surnames in ancient times and the disregard by younger sons of the father's name down to, and in the majority of cases even through the middle ages, combined with carelessness in the spelling of names in quite modern times, make the tracing of a family pedigree prior to 1500 an exceedingly difficult and delicate matter.

In 1864 a genealogy[1] was published which contains the results of an exhaustive study of the history of the name Harding. According to this authority it is a name found in all dialects of the Goths and signifies martial valor. It has been traced to France, Germany and Scandinavia and has also been found in Britain prior to the establishment of the feudal system. It seems to have been bestowed indiscriminately upon individuals irrespective of family relationship, and perhaps even upon tribes, as significant of qualities most admired. It is not improbable that the towns in England and northern Europe bearing the name with various suffixes, were the scenes in ancient times of events in which the Goths gloried; but in some instances it may have been

[1] A genealogical register of the descendants of several ancient Puritans", by Rev. Abner Morse, A. M. Published by H. W. Dutton & Son, Boston, in 1864. In four volumes.

given to a locality because it was the frequent, or permanent retreat, or stronghold of some individual, or tribe which had won the name in martial contest. Between the coming of Hengist and Horsa in 449 and the Norman Conquest, the name had been thus given to many places in central and southern Britain and in 1086 there were seven localities in the western part mentioned in Doomsday Book. By that date (1086) the name had become common in the Kingdom as a family name and is recorded in the Latin of the period as Hardinus, Hardine, Hardincus, Hardineus filius Elnodi, Hardingus and Hardingus filius Alnodi, as proprietors, or assignees. It is said that these might have been wholly, or in part Normans, but they were more probably Saxon Thanes continued in their possessions by William the Conqueror. In the 11th century Hardin became a surname under circumstances denoting distinction; and in the early 12th century coats of arms were given men of the name. Burke, in his "General Armory" gives fifteen distinct coats of arms by the name Hardin or Harding, several of which show by their simplicity of design their very early origin.

Having thus early become scattered over England, it is not surprising that, lacking authoritative evidence, the direct source of the New England Hardings should be largely a matter of surmise. No attempt will be made in this paper to clear up or reconcile the many contradictory statements made concerning the relationship of the first of the name to come to this country, or the English home from which they came. That is a matter to be decided by careful search of English records. Herein we can only note what has been done in the past by genealogists of the Harding family.

The genealogy before mentioned, viz.: "Descendants of several ancient Puritans", devotes nearly all of the fourth volume to the Hardings of America. It gives a list of twelve persons of the name who came to New England during the first thirty-five years after the landing of the Pilgrims, but

does not name their ancestors, their relationship to each other (with three exceptions), or the place, or places in old England from whence they came. Their names are:

1. Richard Harding
2. Joseph Harding
3. Abraham Harding

} Came to New England in 1623.

4. Stephen Harding
5. Richard Harnden
6. Edward Haraden
7. Elizabeth Harding. (She came in 1635 with Thomas Buttolph whose wife was her sister. In 1639, when less than seventeen years of age, she married Abraham Harding (No. 3 above) and among the descendants of their son, Abraham, are several distinguished clergymen and an eminent portrait painter, Chester Harding. See Bryan's English Dictionary of eminent artists and American Cyclopedias.)
8. Capt. Robert Harding who came with Gov. Winthrop in 1630; made freeman in 1634; selectman of Boston; married Hester, daughter of Gov. George Wyllis of Connecticut; removed to Rhode Island and eventually returned to England, leaving no descendants in New England.
9. Philip Harding, alias "Hardy", residence Boston and Marblehead, Mass.; married Susanna ———; died in 1679, leaving a daughter, Jane, who married ——— Rein.
10. William Harding of New Haven, Conn., 1642. Whipped out of the colony in 1643, and nothing further known of him.
11. Thomas Harding, received as an inhabitant of Boston in 1656. Perhaps the same Thomas who embarked from London in September, 1635, for St. Christopher's. He had no child recorded.
12. George Harding was of Marblehead, Mass., in 1649, and nothing further known of him.

To this list should be added the name of John Harding, for, in the record of Stephen Harding, "the blacksmith of Providence", of the second generation, it says, "Stephen is probably the son of John, brother of Richard" (first on the list). The birth of this Stephen is given as occurring at

Weymouth, Mass., in 1624, therefore, his father must have come with his brothers, Richard, Joseph and Abraham who arrived with Capt. Robert Gorges in August, 1623. This book says further, speaking of Capt. Robert Gorges, "Sir Robert[2] Gorges, his near kinsman, if not himself, had married Mary Harding, daughter and heir of William Harding; and whichever was her husband we may reasonably suppose that some of Lady Gorges relatives would have accompanied him. If she was his (Capt. Gorges) wife, and attended him, the Hardings were probably her brothers." This is a very questionable genealogical conclusion.

This book gives a very full account of Richard Harding who settled at Braintree, Mass., soon after his arrival in New England. His name is variously spelled in the old records, as are the names of most of the first settlers in this country. In Boston it was written "Richard Harden of Bantry". He was made a freeman, which implies church membership, May 10, 1648, and died after December 18, 1657 (O. S.), when his will was made. Married twice, names of wives not given, but is said to have left a son John, a daughter Lydia, "and perhaps others". The descendants of his brother Joseph are given in this book down to the middle of the 19th century; and the record of his brother Abraham (mentioned briefly under Elizabeth Harding, No. 7 of the list of immigrants) covers thirty-three pages of the large volume.

This genealogy of the Hardings is the only one of any account appearing for many years. In 1909 were published two volumes of the History of Wilkes-Barré and the Wyoming Valley, by Oscar J. Harvey, which contain a brief record of the family of Captain Stephen Harding, one of the first settlers in Exeter, Pa., and the father of the two Harding boys, Benjamin and Stukeley, who were murdered by the Indians three days before the Battle and Massacre of Wyoming. (Vol. II: 992.). In 1910 Mrs. Amy Hard-

[2] A careless substitution of names. It should be Sir Ferdinand Gorges.

ing DeWitt published a book entitled "The Hardings, from their landing at Boston and settlement at Weymouth Landing or Braintree, in 1623". Her account of the first migration of Hardings to New England is as follows: "That they came with and under the patronage of Sir Fernando Gorges and his brother Capt. Robert Gorges, ... one of whom had married Mary Harding, daughter of William of Somersetshire, England, is a legitimate implication from the records of Weymouth and Braintree. Tradition as well as historical data make Richard and Joseph Harding the brothers of Lady Gorges and there can hardly be a doubt but they, the brothers . . . were the ancestors of the Hardings of the United States." Mrs. DeWitt does not tell us that she personally searched the ancient records of which she speaks. It would be of interest to know. In a publication of hers two years after the one quoted, entitled "The Hardings and sketch of the Wyoming Valley", she says: "William Harding of Somersetshire, Eng., had four sons, Richard, Joseph, Abraham and Stephen, and daughter Mary who married Mr. Gorges, and doubtless these brothers were the ancestors of the Hardings in the United States". No references to authorities are given for this statement. These two books do not give the line of President Harding but carry out very fully the record of Capt. Stephen Harding, brother of Abraham, the President's ancestor.

In 1920 began the flood of newspaper and other articles about the ancestors of Warren Gamaliel Harding. First of all came the pedigree issued by the National Republican Committee. This was based upon a long distance telephone conversation between an enterprising reporter of a St. Louis paper and Wilbur J. Harding of Keystone, Iowa. Mr. Harding[3] is authority for the above statement and says that he was given no opportunity to correct the proof before it went to press. This pedigree was widely, and apparently

[3] Letter from Wilbur J. Harding to Mrs. Miller, dated June 2, 1924.

carelessly, copied by newspapers all over the country, some giving one name and some another to the immigrant ancestor.

June 26, 1920, the New York Tribune published a short sketch of the Hardings. This did not go back of Stephen of the second generation in America, and was fairly correct in its record of later generations, making only a few mistakes in dates. About the same time the New York Sun published a long article which compares favorably with later research into the past history of the family. It, also, begins the record with Stephen "of Providence", second generation, carrying the line correctly down to the President, but gives much less space to his forbears than to the family of Capt. Stephen Harding of Wyoming Valley and his immediate family.

October 11, 1924, the Public Ledger of Philadelphia, Pa., in its column devoted to "Pennsylvanians, Past and Present" written by Frederic A. Godcharles, published a sketch of Capt. Stephen Harding and the Wyoming Massacre of 1778. It closes with this: "It is from this patriotic family that the late President Warren G. Harding claimed his descent, and well may he have been proud of his ancestors". It is not probable that Mr. Godcharles meant to convey the idea that President Harding was an actual lineal descendant of Capt. Stephen Harding of Wyoming fame, but the sentence quoted is an unfortunate ending to an otherwise admirable sketch.

The limits of this paper do not permit the mention of all that was written and printed about President Warren G. Harding between the years 1920 and 1925, but the above excerpts give a fairly good idea of what they contained. They all stressed the heroism and sufferings of the Hardings during the Battle and Massacre of Wyoming, giving prominence to the family of Captain Stephen Harding, and only casually, if at all, mentioning the direct ancestors of the President.

One month after his inauguration, President Harding wrote a letter to the New England Historic Genealogical Society expressing his appreciation of the honor conferred upon him in his election to the honorary membership of that society. With this letter he sent an outline of his paternal ancestral line in America. If it is the pedigree published in the Society's magazine for April, 1921 (Vol. 77, p. 243, New England Historical and Genealogical Register), it is far from satisfactory. Among other incorrect statements it says: "Major Abraham Harding, Jr., born 1740, died 1820, removed with his parents to the Wyoming Valley. On attaining his majority he removed to Port Jervis, Orange Co., N. Y., where he married Huldah Tryon and entered the service of his country in Col. William Allison's Regiment. After the Revolution he returned to the Wyoming Valley and became successively a captain and major in the Pennsylvania militia." It is unbelievable that President Harding signed his name to any such hodge-podge, and we conclude that some one made a grave mistake in copying the record sent to the society. We are upheld in this conclusion by the careful compiling of his pedigree by himself as shown below. This is taken from the Genealogical Department of the Boston Transcript of date October 6, 1924. This article is signed C. A. H. and was written in answer to a query in a previous issue of the paper. We give an excerpt: "The second answer is that of the statement issued by President Harding himself, over his own attested signature, and delivered to a patriotic society as a qualification for his membership therein. This formal statement of pedigree . . . . places two generations, if not three, of the Hardings in Devonshire, England, before the family came to America; and it shows that back of them nothing is known of President Harding's ancestry. Upon what precise record authority Warren Gamaliel Harding reached the conclusion he gave in his said signed pedigree has not been published." The pedigree referred to is as follows:

1. John Harding, of Devonshire, England.
2. Richard Harding, born at Dunboro (Denbury) Devonshire.
3. Stephen Harding, born in England; died at Providence, R. I., Feb. 20, 1698.
4. Abraham Harding, died at Providence, R. I., Nov. 23, 1694; married Deborah ———
5. Stephen Harding, born at Providence, R. I., in 1681.
6. Abraham Harding, born at Warwick, R. I., June 14, 1720; died in Susquehanna County, Pa., in 1806; married at Waterford, Conn., Anna Dolson.
7. Abraham Harding, born at Waterford, Conn., in 1740; married at or near Waterford, in 1762, Huldah Tryon.
8. Amos Harding, born at Port Jervis, N. Y., March 19, 1764; died in Richland Co., Ohio, in 1839; married in Luzerne Co., Pa., in 1784, Phebe Tripp, born in 1769 and died at LaPorte, Ind., in 1847.
9. George Tryon Harding, born in Luzerne Co., Pa., June 15, 1790; died at Corsica,* Ohio, Jan. 9, 1860; married in Susquehanna Co., Pa., May 1, 1816, Elizabeth Madison, born in 1800, died at Corsica, Ohio, Feb. 8, 1866.
10. Charles Alexander Harding, born in Susquehanna Co., Pa., April 8, 1820; died at Corsica, Ohio, April 17, 1878; married in Morrow Co., Ohio, March 28, 1840, Mary Ann Crawford, born in Beaver Co., Pa., August 26, 1823, died at Corsica, Ohio, in March, 1895.
11. George Tryon Harding, born at Corsica, June 12, 1847; married at Gallion, Ohio, May 7, 1864, Phebe Elizabeth Dickerson, born at Corsica, Ohio, Dec. 21, 1843, died at Marion, Ohio, May 29, 1910.
12. Warren Gamaliel Harding, born Nov. 1, 1865.

In 1922 the Sulgrave Institution of America erected on a wall in the village of Sulgrave, Northamptonshire, England, a tablet in memory of the ancestors of President Warren G. Harding which bears the statement that those ancestors (not named) once resided near that spot, or place. What proof, if any, has been published by this society for its belief that the New England Hardings came from Sulgrave, is not at present available for reference. Devonshire, designated by

*Now Blooming Grove, Morrow Co.

the President as the English home of his ancestors, adjoins the county of Somerset, the seat of the Gorges family, which is a fact favorable to the belief that the Gorges and Harding families intermarried and emigrated together to New England. Northamptonshire is one hundred and fifty miles to the north-east of these two counties, a tremendous distance three hundred years ago compared to the present. However, that is no proof that there was not occasional communication, or relationship between families of the two localities.

In 1925 Wilbur J. Harding published "The Hardings in America". If, as is not at all unlikely, he was the authority[4] behind the Devonshire record signed by the President in 1921, later research surely compelled his change of belief before the publication of this book. In this latest of Harding genealogies (page 21) we find that the will of John Harding, the head of the family "so far as can be traced by public records" so it reads, has been found recorded in Northamptonshire, England. This legal document was filed March 3, 1637, and contains a notation that the testator died January 14, 1637. It names Richard, Joseph and John Harding as his sons and gives certain real and personal property to his brother William Harding. The filing of this will proves that John Harding died a resident of Northamptonshire, and is good foundation for the belief that he had lived there some time previous to his death. That he removed there from Devonshire, where his children may have been born, is not an impossibility. That he had a brother William is also a fact proven by the will, and that this William had a daughter Mary is a tradition that has persisted for so long a time that, lacking documentary proof to the contrary, we have a right to believe it. This relationship between William and his daughter Mary and John and his three sons named above, is further substantiated by another statement made in the gene-

[4] In a letter to Mrs. Miller, dated May 10, 1924, Abigail Harding, (now Mrs. Ralph T. Lewis) sister of the President, referred her to Wilbur J. Harding as the recognized genealogist of the family.

alogy quoted. On page 17, we read: "In seeking to uncover the identity of those early pioneers who may be classed as the 'First Hardings on American soil', the historian must go back to the work, 'A Briefe Narration of the Original Undertakings of the Advancement of Plantations into the Parts of Amerika, especially Showing the Beginnings, Progress and Continuance of that of New England', written by Sir Ferdinando Gorges in 1658." According to this, "which must be considered authentic history of these undertakings", Mary Harding, wife of Capt. Robert Gorges, is described as "the daughter and *heir* of William Harding, Gent."; and in the list of passengers who came to New England with the Gorges party "we find the names of Joseph Harding, John Harding, wife and young sons and Richard Harding, wife and infant son." Using this ancient document as authority, Wilbur J. Harding argues, correctly, that if Mary Harding was the *heir* (not co-heir) of her father, then she was an only child; therefore, these Hardings, who emigrated with her, could not have been her brothers, but were probably her cousins.

"The Hardings in America" traces the descent of Warren Gamaliel Harding from John Harding of Northamptonshire, England, through his son Richard, immigrant to New England, and his son, Stephen "of Providence" as he is commonly called, exactly as in the pedigree written by the President and already given in this paper. Sufficient references to authentic records are given to convince us that the record is undoubtedly correct in all the essentials, and it is used as the basis for the record which follows:

1. Richard Harding,[5] born in England about 1583; died at Braintree, Mass., after Dec. 18, 1657 (O. S.) when his will was made. He settled at Braintree soon after his arrival in this country in 1623 and was a "mariner engaged in fishing". He was twice married, first in England (name of wife unknown), second to Elizabeth Adams in Braintree, who survived him. He left two

[5] cf with record from "Descendants of several ancient Puritans," given on page 4.

sons, children of his first wife, and a daughter, Lydia, only child of the second. The elder son, John, was the infant bought from England. The younger was,

2. Stephen Harding, born at Braintree, Mass., about 1624. He was a blacksmith by trade, and about 1647 migrated to the south-west of Braintree settling in that part of old Rehoboth which was many years later made the town of Swanzey. This locality was under the jurisdiction of Plymouth Colony which was more liberal than the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and therefore many of the despised sect of Baptists had gathered in that region. The recently organized Baptist Church at Providence, R. I., was near enough to these settlers to afford them the enjoyment of its church privileges. It is a mistake of Harding genealogists hard to understand, that they persist in recording that Stephen Harding joined "the Swanzey Baptist Church." There was no such church or town at the time he lived there. There were many Baptists around him and they probably held meetings in their homes, but they must have gone to Providence across the river for communion and undoubtedly were members of the Providence Church, the first of the Baptist faith in America.[6] It is not impossible that Stephen Harding became a convert to the Baptist faith before leaving Braintree and sought a home in the Baptist community of lower Rehoboth in consequence. His father was a "freeman" which denotes church membership in the Puritan church, and if Stephen forsook the faith of that church while still a resident of Braintree his life there was surely an uncomfortable one. While living in Rehoboth Stephen married Bridget Estance, daughter of Thomas, a Welshman who had early settled in Rehoboth but later removed to Providence, where Stephen Harding is also found in the public records of 1664. There he died, Feb. 20, 1698, having had four daughters and three sons. The youngest son was,

[6] The Providence Baptist Church was organized in 1639; the Swanzey Church in 1663, and the third church in that vicinity, the Pawtucket, in 1693. (See "History of the Baptists" and "Fifty years among the Baptists" by David Benedict; "New England's struggle for religious liberty", by Rev. David B. Ford; "A short history of the Baptists" by Henry C. Vedder, D. D.)

3. Abraham Harding, born in 1656; died Nov. 23, 1694; married Deborah whose last name is unknown. She survived him, marrying Moses Bartlett a year after Abraham's death. Abraham Harding lived in Providence, R. I., and left at his death three daughters and four sons. The fourth child and third son was,

4. Stephen Harding (Captain), born at Providence, R. I., in 1681; died in Connecticut, May 31, 1750. About 1715 he removed to Warwick, R. I., and became a prosperous mariner, building and sailing his own ships, hence the title "Captain". Later he bought 400 acres of land in the Mohegan tract of New London County, Connecticut, near Uncasville and just south of the present boundary line between Montville and Waterford. He removed there with his brother Israel in 1732. The name of his wife is not recorded. His children were:

1. John Harding, who removed to Redstone, Pa., and later to Kentucky, where he dropped the "g" from his name and his descendants write it Hardin. Many of this branch of Hardings have been prominent as soldiers and statesmen in the middle west, and in their honor have been named a county in Kentucky, one in Iowa, one in Illinois, one in Tennessee and one in Ohio.
2. Abraham Harding (more later).
3. Captain Stephen Harding, of Wyoming Valley; married Amy Gardner, daughter of Stephen and Frances (Congdon) Gardner and sister of Stephen Gardner, Jr., another settler in the Wyoming Valley. Recent search of ancient records in England and Rhode Island, has established the fact that Frances Congdon, mother of Amy Gardner, was a lineal descendant in the 14th generation from Edward III, King of England, and a great-grand-daughter of that mother of eight Governors of Rhode Island, Frances Latham and her first husband, William Dungan. The heroism of Captain Stephen Harding, commander of Jenkins Fort in Exeter, at the time of the Wyoming Massacre, has been so fully and admirably told by all the historians and other writers of the Wyoming Valley that it is not necessary to recount it here.
4. Thomas Harding, born May 16, 1727; died Feb. 20, 1804; married Mary Richards and resided at Water-

ford, Conn. "The Hardings in America" records seven children; the "Descendants of several ancient Puritans" names nine, four of whom are sons, and all the children, with one exception, are said to have lived in Connecticut. One son, James, lived in Waterford, Conn., until 1807 when, this genealogy says, he removed to Exeter, Luzerne Co., Pa., where he died. He had, Nancy, Lucy, Hannah, Daniel a prominent citizen of Exeter, James, Eliza, Charles.

5. Israel Harding, born in 1733; died in 1783; married in 1759, Sarah Harris. He is called Colonel in "Hardings in America" and Captain in the older genealogy mentioned above, which gives the following account of him: "He served as captain in the last French and Indian War and remained in Connecticut until the beginning of the Revolution, when he sided with the British. His brother Thomas used his influence to secure from the Governor of Connecticut Colony a permit for Israel to go to Long Island from whence he escaped to Nova Scotia where he died. He had: Israel, a merchant of Halifax; Harris, a Baptist preacher; a daughter who married ——— Peck and removed to Ohio." The "Hardings in America" does not mention these children but records a daughter Sabra who married Charles DeWolf, residence not named, and left descendants.

Abraham Harding (No. 2) of the fifth generation in America, son of Capt. Stephen Harding of Warwick , R. I., and Waterford, Conn., was born at Warwick, June 14, 1720, and married in Connecticut, about 1741, Anna Dolson[7], who died in Orange County, New York, in 1802. The name, Abraham Harding, is found among the signers of the Indian Deed of 1754 granting Wyoming lands to the Susquehanna Company, but as there was another Abraham Harding living

[7] Not to be confused with the Dutch family of Dolsen—Dolsan—Dolson which settled in Orange County at an early date, coming from Fishkill on the Hudson.

in Connecticut at that time[8] it is impossible to determine, surely, which one it was. As the brother of the Abraham of this sketch, and many of his relatives, were signers of that Deed, and his son, Abraham, Jr., settled in the Wyoming Valley, it seems probable that the signer was this Abraham. He continued to reside in Connecticut for twenty years after his marriage and all his children were born there.

In 1761, Abraham and Anna Harding with their six sons moved to Orange County, New York. It has been asserted that they settled near Port Jervis in that part of the Minisink which later became Deerpark Township[9]. If this is true, which is very doubtful, he remained there only a short time, since for years before the Revolution he was living eight or nine miles to the northeast of the present town of Port Jervis in what is now Greenville township, in the locality later named Grahamville. It is certain that he lived in this place continuously from the time of his first settlement there until he left Orange County for Pennsylvania. Grahamville was not a village but by 1800 had become a thickly settled farming community. In 1775 Abraham Harding was assessed

[8] Joshua Hempstead recorded in his Diary for Sept. 12, 1734, that he married "Abra'h Harden and Mercy Vibber" on that date. We find in various books a mention of an Abraham Harding of that generation in Connecticut that could not have been the Abraham of this sketch.

[9] In 1798 Rockland County was organized from the southeastern part of Orange, and to offset that loss of territory five townships were taken from Ulster County and annexed to Orange on the north. One of these five townships was Mamakating. Immediately upon annexation, the township of Deerpark was organized from a small portion of Minisink but largely from Mamakating; hence many so called early settlers of Orange County and especially of Deerpark, were really residents of Ulster County until 1798. Port Jervis was begun in 1826 when the Delaware & Hudson canal was being built. It was named for Mr. Jervis, superintendent in charge of constructing the canal.

fourteen shillings for taxes[10]. After the division of New York State into fourteen counties in 1788, Orange County townships were changed in area in some instances, and the town of Minisink, which had been of indefinite boundaries, was organized legally and the first town meeting held in April, 1789. At this meeting Abraham Harding was elected a Highway Master for District 22[11]. In 1790 and '91, he was elected a fence viewer. In the records of these two last meetings he is called "Captain Harding". During the Revolution he served as Second Lieutenant in Colonel Allison's regiment of New York Militia, being commissioned by the Provincial Congress December 1, 1775[12]. His name appears on a certificate issued March 4, 1836, by the Deputy Secretary of State for New York, which states that at the time of the Revolution he was living on the west side of the Wallkill river, which still more definitely names his place of residence many miles east of Deerpark. After the War he remained active in the State Militia, being appointed "Captain No. 5" in 1786 and Second Major in 1794. At the Meeting of the Council of Appointments in 1803, another was appointed in place of "Abraham Harding, who has moved away".[13] This record of military services shows conclusively that Abraham Harding held no higher position in the Continental Army

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[10] Ruttenber & Clark's History of Orange County, page 677, records this assessment under the town of Wawayanda. Minisink included for many years, the present towns of Wawayanda and Greenville. In 1849 Wawayanda was set off from Minisink on the north and in 1853 Greenville was taken from both Minisink and Wawayanda. Abraham Harding lived in the part of Minisink which was later Wawayanda and still later Greenville. This accounts for the many, seemingly contradictory statements of his place of residence.

[11] District 22 was later No. 19 of Greenville.

[12] Record furnished by the Adjutant General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

[13] Council of Appointments, issued by the State of New York, pages 80 and 283.

than Second Lieutenant,[14] although he was called "Major" for several years before his death. His wife died early in 1802 and that same year he left Orange County for Pennsylvania where he became an inmate of the home of his grandson, Amos Harding, in Clifford, Susquehanna County, until his death which occurred in 1806. He was buried on the side of the hill about thirty rods east of the present Baptist Church of Clifford, on the farm of Amos Harding, and there he lies today, his grave obliterated and nothing left to show its exact spot. It will always remain a mystery, which even tradition does not illuminate, why Major Abraham Harding chose to end his days in the rude pioneer home of Amos Harding. His son John was living in Orange County a few miles north of him and many grandchildren were settled around him whom it seems might have given him a home in his old age with many comforts not to be had in Clifford at that time. That he did end his days in Clifford and that his ashes repose there, should be a matter of pride to the little village and a suitable tablet or marker ought to be erected to his memory establishing the spot where he is buried.

The children of Abraham and Anna (Dolson) Harding:

1. Abraham Harding, Jr. (More later).
2. Amos Harding, born in 1746; died in 1808. The "Descendants of several ancient Puritans" says that he was a Baptist preacher.
3. John Harding, born in 1749; died in 1813; married (1), Rhoda King (born 1752; died 1788); married (2), Lydia Tripp.[15] John Harding had eight sons and

[14] The name of Abraham Harding appears as "Major" upon the tablet placed by Montrose Chapter, D. A. R. in the lower corridor of the Court House at Montrose, Pa., in 1924 in memory of the Revolutionary soldiers who lived and died in Susquehanna County. As there were no inhabitants in that county during the war, all these men came there from many different States after peace was declared.

[15] "The Michael Shoemaker Book", page 512, says that a Mrs. Lydia (Tripp) Harding of Deerpark, Orange Co., N. Y., who was born

three daughters, all by his first wife. They all married and had children. (See "Hardings in America", page 37). After his first marriage, John Harding settled in the township of Mamakating, Ulster County, N. Y. and is listed as a signer for that township of the Pledge of 1775.[16] In the Census of 1790 his name is found in Mamakating as having a wife and three daughters, two sons over sixteen and five under. After the annexation of Mamakating township to Orange County and the erection of Deerpark in 1798, he is found in Deerpark, just over the line from Mount Hope township and near Otisville in Mount Hope. (See footnote 9).

4. Lemuel Harding, born in 1751; died before Nov. 12, 1796, when his daughter, Phebe, wife of James Ellsworth, sold all her interest "in common with the other heirs" in the lands of her father Lemuel Harding.[17] The name of his wife, date and place of marriage, and names of children other than Phebe, mentioned above, are not known. Lemuel Harding arrived in the Wyoming Valley May 5th, 1772,[18] and appears to have settled first in the Pittston District. In October, 1772, he signed the petition for a county in Wyoming sent to the General Assembly of Connecticut; and at a meeting of the Susquehanna Company held at Hartford, Conn., June 2, 1773, he was appointed with Caleb Bates and James Brown, a Director for the town of Pittston.[19] At the first Town meeting, held at Wilkes-Barré, March 2, 1774, he was elected a Grand Juror. Sept. 23, 1775, he sold to Francis Hopkins a Pittston Fort Lot, No. 34, about one acre in size, receiving for

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Sept. 6, 1762, and died Dec. 4, 1840, daughter of Job Tripp (See page 560, Shoemaker Book), was married, Nov. 17, 1816, to Deacon John Phillips of Pittston and Abington, Pa., and adds: "She was evidently first married to a Harding who had lived in the Wyoming Valley and removed to the Minisink". This Lydia (Tripp) Harding was undoubtedly the widow of John Harding of Deerpark and went to the Wyoming Valley to live near her Tripp relatives; there marrying Deacon Phillips.

[16] The Pledge to support and defend the acts of the Provincial Congress.

[17] Michael Shoemaker Book, page 512.

[18] Harvey's History of Wilkes-Barré, Vol. II: 732.

[19] Miner's History of Wyoming, page 150.

it £8. This was probably where he had his home as he is henceforth found in Exeter to which he seems to have removed. He is found in the Tax list for Exeter in the year 1776, the valuation of his property being £52., and he paid a tax of £1. 10s. 4d. Nothing further has been found concerning him in the records. It is probable that he and his family sought refuge in Jenkins Fort in June, 1778, but his name does not appear in any list of the inmates that has been found. The Michael Shoemaker Book is incorrect in attributing military service to Lemuel Harding in the Connecticut Militia during the French and Indian War of 1755 to 1758. He was a small child during those years.

5. Oliver Harding, born in 1753; date of death unknown. He came to the Wyoming Valley in September, 1772,[20] and the following month was a signer of the petition for the erection of a county in Wyoming. His name is not found in the Tax lists for Westmoreland, and it is not known where he settled in the Valley. It is not improbable that he made his home with one of his brothers in Pittston, and that he did not own property or make a home for himself in Wyoming as he is not further mentioned in the records except as a soldier. He was a member of the First Westmoreland Independent Company,[21] Robert Durkee, Captain. In "Connecticut in the Revolution", page 263, his name is found in the list of privates in Capt. Durkee's Wyoming Company, no date given. He is there described as five feet, nine inches tall, and twenty years old. This book also gives his name among the privates of Captain Spalding's Independent Company "as united June 28, 1778". An Oliver Harding is found in the 1790 Census living in Chemung Township, Montgomery County, N. Y., credited with four sons under sixteen years of age. This man was evidently of proper age to be the Oliver Harding of this sketch and may have been he. Some of his Harding kinsmen were living in Montgomery County in 1790.

6. Rice Harding, born in 1755; died in 1800. Nothing further known of him.

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[20] Harvey's History of Wilkes-Barré, Vol. II:750.

[21] Harvey's History of Wilkes-Barré, Vol. II:892-894.

We have now covered a period of one hundred and seventy-five years after the coming of Richard Harding to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1623, and have found the Hardings ever moving westward until in the span of four lives after that of Richard, they have made for themselves homes in three other colonies. In all these years after the settlement of the immigrant Richard at Braintree, they followed the vanguard of pioneers to Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York, finding upon their arrival in those colonies the struggle of pioneer settlement giving way to safer and more comfortable living. This was especially true in Connecticut and New York where settlements had been made nearly one hundred years before the Hardings reached those colonies. But now comes a change and we follow the fortunes of the next members of the family to engage our attention, into the wilderness of what was then the far western frontier and into the hardships and dangers of primitive pioneer life.

Abraham Harding, Jr., oldest son of Abraham and Anna (Dolson) Harding, was born in Waterford, Conn., April 14, 1744. He accompanied his parents to Orange Co., N. Y., in 1761, and in the following year returned to Connecticut where, July 9, 1762, he married Huldah Tryon, born May 8, 1743, a daughter of Joseph and Bridget (Curtis) Tryon of New London. She was a descendant in the fifth generation from Abel Tryon, the line after him being Joseph, James, Joseph, Huldah.[22] Abraham and Huldah Harding settled on a farm in Orange County, N. Y., near his father, and there they remained for ten years.[23]

In June, 1772, Abraham Harding, Jr., in company with

[22] "The Hardings in America", page 36.

[23] No record of Abraham Harding, Jr., during those ten years is to be found in Orange County. This is probably due to the fact that from 1683 when the county was formed, until its legal organization in 1788, it was attached to New York City and all records were kept there: also the destruction by fire seventy-five years ago of many Orange County records kept at Goshen has probably made it impossible to find a legal record of the old inhabitants of some sections.

others from his neighborhood, followed his brother Lemuel, who had gone the month before, to the Wyoming Valley in north-eastern Pennsylvania.[24] He arrived there on June 20th, evidently to look the ground over and prepare a home for his family, as on the 26th of the same month he left the Valley, remaining away six weeks.[25] It is supposed that he went back to Orange County, N. Y., to bring his family to their new home. He settled on the east side of the Susquehanna river in, or near, what is now the city of Pittston.[26] He immediately took a prominent position in civic affairs and his name appears as a member of important committees in Wyoming during the years preceding the Massacre. He was a signer of the petition for the erection of a county in Wyoming sent to the General Assembly of Connecticut Colony in October, 1772.[27] At the first Town meeting, held March 2, 1774, he was elected a fence viewer,[28] and November 22 of the same year, at a Town meeting, he and eight other men were appointed a committee "to make inquiry into, and search after any person or persons that are suspected to have taken land under the title of Pennsylvania, . . . and that they have full power to expel any person or persons from this purchase and town, whom they or ye major part of them judge unwholesome inhabitants, on account of their taking land under ye title of Pennsylvania," etc.[29] In August, 1774,

[24] The name of Abraham Harding appears in the list of settlers in Pittston, April 30, 1772 (Vol. II: 84, Wyoming Historical and Geological Society Proceedings), when he appears to have drawn a lot for Isaiah Halstead. He could not have stayed in Wyoming long at this time.

[25] Harvey's History of Wilkes-Barré, Vol. II: 736.

[26] W. J. Harding is incorrect in saying (page 81, "Hardings in America") that Abraham Harding settled "up the river" on the west side in Exeter, in what he calls the "Harding region". He is found in the Westmoreland records nowhere except in Pittston District.

[27] Harvey's History of Wilkes-Barré, Vol. II: 752.

[28] Miner's History of Wyoming, page 156.

[29] Miner's History of Wyoming, pages 156-161. On the latter page it says: "These nine gentlemen named on the committee, embraced, as rightly it should in matters so delicate and important, one of the leading men from each township or district."

Abraham Harding was one of a committee of three to appraise a dwelling house and lot in Pittston District in "ye North East corner of ye Fort", taken in execution of Lovinia Hawkins vs. Daniel Adams. "The above named men were all under oath and delivered to ye plaintiff in peaceable possession"[30]. In 1777 he was a Director for Pittston District with Daniel Ross and Isaiah Halstead, and these three men distributed to Isaac Finch a mill seat on the Lackawanna river near the mouth of Spring Brook. It was a corner lot, No. 54. The date of this transaction was March 31, 1777.[31] In the Westmoreland Tax list for 1776, the valuation of his taxable property is given as £55., and he paid a tax of £1. 12s, 1d. In August, 1777, his valuation is £28. and he paid £1. 8s. In November, 1778, the valuation was £28. and the tax paid was £1. 8s., both valuation and tax the same as the year before.[32] He still resided in Pittston District when in June, 1778, the alarm occasioned by the impending invasion by the British and Indians drove the settlers of Wyoming to the Forts for protection. It is uncertain, lacking definite records, to what fort Abraham Harding took his family. "The Hardings in America" (page 90), records an interview given by Amos Harding, son of Abraham, in his old age, in the presence of his grandson ten years of age. This grandson in his old age repeated what he remembered of this interview. It is easy to believe that in the lapse of years the remembrance of that interview became hazy in the mind of the grandson. He certainly got some dates wrong which we cannot believe was the mistake of the grand-father. However, if he was correct in reporting that his grand-father said the family of Abraham Harding was in Jenkins Fort at the time of the Battle of July 3rd, 1778, it must be accepted

[30] Proceedings of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, Vol. II: 80.

[31] Deed Book, No. 1, page 309, Wilkes-Barré, Pa.

[32] Proceedings of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society, Vol. V: 237-239.

as the truth. Amos Harding was fourteen years of age in 1778 and ought to have known where his family was at that time. On the other hand, we do not find Abraham Harding listed as an inmate of that Fort, and we know that he was not with the Hardings and others who went up the river to work on June 30th when Benjamin and Stukeley were killed. His name is not among the survivors of the Battle; nor is it found among those named as inmates of the Pittston Fort.[33] In Sheldon Reynolds' "Frontier Forts" he says: "All the families living in Pittston and its neighborhood were assembled within this (Pittston Fort) enclosure during the Battle of Wyoming." And he says further, in speaking of the small detachment of the 24th Regiment stationed at the Fort as well as the men of Pittston who were there: "The responsibility of protecting the women and children under their charge outweighed every other consideration". It seems improbable that Abraham Harding would take his family across the river to Jenkins Fort directly towards and almost in the path of the oncoming enemy, and to a fort much more exposed to danger than the one near by at Pittston. Also, the men of Wyoming were working in their fields until the very presence of the foe prevented. Why would he put the river between himself and his farm at this critical time and deprive his wife and children of his protection while cultivating his crops? Weighing all the evidence at hand, it seems reasonable to think that Abraham Harding and his family were in Pittston Fort July 3rd, 1778, rather than prisoners with the inmates of Jenkins Fort on that day. They fled with the other refugees over the Pocono and through the "Shades of Death", their eleven year old son, Joseph, dying on the way, the hardships of the terrible journey proving too much for his strength. They undoubtedly found a refuge with their many relatives in the old home in Orange County,

[33] Wyoming Historical and Geological Society's Proceedings, Vol. II: 79. List of inmates of Pittston Fort.

N. Y., although no account of the four months following the flight from Wyoming has come down to us.[34]

In the latter part of October, 1778, Abraham Harding and family returned to Wyoming, taking up again the task of making a home. With the help of his only remaining son, Amos, he cleared away much of the forest on his land and in the course of time had a very comfortable home. Apparently, he had financial troubles for a while after his return, as did many of his neighbors, and we find him in debt to the estate of Captain Obadiah Gore, for a "note in hand" to the amount of £3. 10s., September 1, 1780. When the agitation for the erection of Luzerne County arose, he and his son Amos both signed the petition to the General Assembly of Pennsylvania.[35] November 19, 1787, he sold to Alexander MacKay one-half of Meadow Lot, No. 7, in Pittston Township. This was acknowledged November 27, 1787, and recorded at Wilkes-Barré, May 31, 1788, in Deed Book, No. 1, page 49. Another record is: Abraham Harding of Pittstown, Luzerne County to Enos Brown. Acknowledged April 27, 1789, before Benjamin Carpenter, Judge of Luzerne County. Lot No. 32 of first division of Farm Lots, Pittstown Township. Sum paid £36. Recorded at Wilkes-Barré in Deed Book, No. 1, page 154.[36]

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[34] "The Hardings in America" (page 84), intimates that the Hardings remained at Stroudsburg until their return to Wyoming in the fall; but any one familiar with the history of the refugees and conditions at Stroudsburg, will doubt that they were there very long. Orange County was a comparatively easy journey from Stroudsburg, and there is every reason to believe that they accompanied the many other refugees who went on to that region.

[35] A copy of this petition is now in the Library of the Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, Pa., from which this record is taken.

[36] From a study of other deeds and records found in Wilkes-Barré, we find that there was another man by the name of Abraham Harding owning property in Pittston during the years 1790 to 1794, and probably living there for a portion of those years. We find: Deed No. 1.—"Abraham Harding of Pittstown to Henry Harding, *son of said Abraham*. Date Nov. 22, 1790. Acknowledged by one of the witnesses

Abraham Harding, Jr., died October 22, 1815, and his wife in 1812, according to the family record in the Bible of Amos Harding, their son. The place, or places, of their deaths are not given in this family record. Some of their kinsmen believe that they died in Orange County, N. Y., but offer no proof of same. As we have shown, the name Abraham Harding was borne by several men in that county, and it is difficult to distinguish between them. None claim that they returned to Orange County before 1800. The late Major A. J. Harding of Chicago, who spent many years and much money in the preparation of a genealogy of the Hardings which was never published, asserted that he had positive proof that they died in Luzerne County, Pa.; but whatever that proof was is

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and recorded May 7, 1791. One half of two Meadow Lots, Township of Pittstown—numbers 6 and 8 and one half of 50 acres being lot on which I now live—bounded southerly on land of James Benedict and northerly on land of Mr. Sandford together with all right in other divided land." Plainly, on the face of it, this was not the Abraham Harding of this sketch, for HE HAD NO SON HENRY. Again we find: Deed No. 2.—"Abraham Harding and Henry Harding of Pittstown, to William Miller. Date May 22, 1793. Lot of 100 acres, regularly laid out to Stephen Harding." From other records we find that a Stephen Harding died in Pittston prior to Sept. 11, 1793, when Henry Harding was appointed administrator of his estate. Both Henry and his father, Abraham Harding, appear to have been heirs of Stephen Harding, and to have been closely related to him. Again we find: Deed No. 3—"Abraham Harding, now living in Township of Minisink in County of Orange, New York, to Orman Ensign, land in Pittstown. Date June 18, 1794." (The Michael Shoemaker Book, page 511, quotes these deeds as executed by Abraham Harding of this sketch.) The Abraham Harding of this sketch signed the petition mentioned on page 28, in April, 1794. Why was he so interested in that petition if he was to remove to Minisink in two months, June 18, 1794, the date of deed No. 3? An Abraham Harding is found in the 1790 census for Minisink Township, Orange County, N. Y., who was not Major Abraham Harding (page 16) of the same township. He might have been the Abraham of these deeds as there was time between the taking of the census and November 22, 1790, the date of the first deed, for him to remove to Pittston. He evidently returned to Minisink before June 18, 1794, the date of the third deed.

now lost by the scattering of his manuscript among his descendants. A recent search of the probate records of Orange and Luzerne Counties throws no light upon this problem which seems to be unsolvable.

The children of Abraham and Huldah (Tryon) Harding were:

1. Amos Harding, born March 19, 1764; died July 10, 1839.
2. Joseph Harding, born in 1766 in Orange County, N. Y.; died in July, 1778, on the Pocono mountain, Pa., in the retreat from Wyoming after the massacre.
3. John Harding, born in Orange County, N. Y., in 1768; died in the Wyoming Valley in 1776.
4. Daughter, born in Orange County, N. Y.; died there in childhood.
5. Daughter. She married John Saxon in 1801 and went to Ontario County, N. Y., in 1804.

Amos Harding,[37] oldest child of Abraham and Huldah (Tryon) Harding, was born March 19, 1764, in Orange County, N. Y., and died July 10, 1839, in Blooming Grove, Morrow County, Ohio. He accompanied his parents to the Wyoming Valley in 1772 and passed through the horrors of the British and Indian invasion in the summer of 1778 and the terrible journey across the mountains to safety after the massacre. After the return of the family to the valley in the fall of 1778, he assisted his father in clearing and otherwise improving his farm in Pittstown. August 21, 1784, he married Phoebe Tripp,[38] daughter of William and Sarah (Slocum) Tripp. She was born in Orange County, N. Y.,

[37] In "The Michael Shoemaker Book", page 514, Amos Harding is said to be the son of Thomas and grandson of Capt. Stephen and Amy (Gardner) Harding, and his wife Phoebe is said to be the daughter of Isaac and Eleanor (Frear) Tripp of Clifford.

[38] She was fifth in descent from John Tripp and his wife, Mary Paine, of Portsmouth, R. I. The line is: John, Peleg, Job, Isaac, William, Phoebe. She was sixth from Anthony Slocum. The line is: Anthony, Giles, Samuel, Giles, Joseph, Sarah, who married William Tripp, Phoebe. She was a cousin of Frances Slocum, the "captive of Wyoming".

August 17, 1767, and died at the home of her son, John Harding, in LaPorte County, Indiana, November 2, 1844. Her parents were early settlers in the Wyoming region and among the sufferers during and after the massacre.

After the marriage of Amos Harding his father gave him half of the improved part of his farm and there he and his wife lived for sixteen years.[39] Nine of their children were born in that home. His name is found in the 1790 census credited with one son and two daughters. The long controversy between the State of Pennsylvania and the Connecticut settlers in Wyoming and the uncertainty of the final outcome so discouraged him that he decided to leave the Valley and make a home elsewhere.[40] When and to whom he sold his Pittston farm is not known as no deeds of such transaction can now be found; but that he was well supplied with money when he left there is evidenced by his purchase of land and his other business dealings in the new home to which he removed.

He was a signer of the petition to the Pennsylvania General Assembly, praying for the erection of Luzerne County; and was also a signer of the manuscript petition for the erection of Nicholson Township to the Luzerne County Quarter Sessions,—furnished by William A. Wilcox of Scranton, Pennsylvania[41]. Nicholson Township erected in 1795 by this petition included that part of the present county of Susquehanna which covers the townships of Clifford, Lenox, Herrick, Gibson, Harford, the southern part of Ararat and eastern parts of Lathrop, and Brooklyn. In the present counties of Wyoming and Lackawanna it included those parts of Fell, Greenfield, Benton and the eastern half of Nicholson north of a line drawn east from the mouth of Meshoppen Creek to the Wayne county line.

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[39] Statement of Amos Harding. See page 91, "Hardings in America."

[40] From family records, quoted by W. J. Harding in a letter to Mrs. Miller dated June 2, 1924.

[41] See frontispiece.

Thornbottom was a locality,—not a municipality with boundaries. It was on the Tunkhannock Creek about where the Borough of Nicholson is, with its big D., L. & W. railroad viaduct; bottom meaning bottomlands along the stream. The signers to the petition may not have all been residents at the time of signing, some possibly being merely owners of property there. We have no reason to think that Abraham Harding resided there and we know that his son Amos (also a signer) did not become a resident of Nicholson Township until 1800. The petition reads:

> To The Honorable Cort to be Holden at Wilksberry in and for the County of Luzarn on the Third monday in november Instant Come your Honnours humble Petioners and Begs Leave To inform yours Honours That on Runing An East Line from the mouth of Meshoping it Appears to be on the South of Us and of Cours we Cannot belong to The Towndship of Tunkhannock and the Cituation of the Cuntry Deprives us of Thosse Inestemable Privileges That our fellow Citizens Enjoy In giveing our Votes in Elections as The Distance is at Least forty miles The Nearess way Ever yet Ocupied as a Road to Wialusink we there fore Humbly Pray That Your Honours Would Take The maters afore Said into your Wise Considration and grant Us Releas by Setting Us off as a Seperate Township Bounded on the South By the North line of The township of Tunkhannock and on the East West and North as in your Wisdom be found most Proper and yours Honours Humble Petioners as in Duty Bound Shall Ever Pray

	Isaiah Hallsted
Thornbottom April 1794	Reuben Coller
	Isaac Doud
Eliphulet Stephens Juner	Amos Harding
Henry Felten	Jacob Hoit
Samuel Woodruff	Elemuel Cary
Beniaman Kidder	Henery Allison
Daniel Coller	Ebenzr. Bartlett
Jesse Coller	Ebenezer Stephens
Joseph Hallsted	John Sager
Samuel Hallsted	John Robinson
Abraham Harding	Joseph Rider

In March, 1800,[42] Amos Harding with his wife and eight children (one child having previously died) removed to that part of Nicholson township in Luzerne County which is now Clifford township, Susquehanna County, Pa.[43] This place was forty, or more miles from their old home in the Wyoming Valley, in a dense forest with scarcely a clearing, or habitation between it and the Susquehanna river at Pittston. There were no roads of any kind between the two places, but the snows which usually cover this region in March may have made possible the moving of household goods and other necessities upon sleds through the pathless forest; otherwise they had to be carried upon the backs of horses or oxen. The new home to which they came had no name, but was called "the Beech woods", an appellation given to a large stretch of country in the present counties of Susquehanna and Lackawanna.[44]

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[42] This date is determined from authentic records.

[43] Luzerne County was erected from Northumberland County in 1786 and then included Susquehanna County which was erected from Luzerne in 1810 and legally organized in 1812. Clifford township, which was erected by Luzerne County in 1806, is in the southeast corner of Susquehanna County, being bounded on the east by Wayne County and on the south by Lackawanna. The valley in which is now the village of Clifford and the place where Amos Harding settled, is just north and within sight of the division line between the counties of Susquehanna and Lackawanna. This valley lies nearly north and south and is about three-quarters of a mile long and of varying width, nowhere being a half mile broad. It has an elevation of about 1100 feet. December 28, 1774, warrants for lots 37, 38 and 39 (See Warrantee map of Greenfield township, Lacka. Co.), in Northumberland County, Pa., containing 311 acres, 4 perches each, were granted by Pennsylvania to John Maxwell Nesbitt and deeded to him May 4, 1796. These lots were patented to David H. Conyngham October 24, 1800, and later became the property of Redmond Conyngham. (Record furnished by the Deputy Secretary of Internal Affairs, Harrisburg, Pa.) The village of Clifford and most of the valley lie in lot 37.

[44] Some years later the cluster of houses which formed the nucleus of the village of Clifford was called Farmersville, a name which clung to it even after the establishment of the Clifford post office in 1851. Letters came to Clifford post office directed to Farmersville as late as 1866.

Upon the arrival of the Harding family at Clifford they found a settler, Adam Miller, already upon the ground. He had come there in the spring of 1799 and bought all the land in the upper, or southern end of the valley, building his log cabin on the west side of the creek.[45] See illustration 1). Mr. Harding bought land of Mr. Miller on the east side of the creek and built his cabin a few rods east of the present main street of the village and on the north side of the cross road leading to Dundaff. The site of this cabin is now (1928) the property of Mrs. Andrew Chamberlain and the cabin stood in what is her back garden.

In September, 1800, six months after coming to Clifford, Lydia, the twelve year old daughter of Amos and Phoebe Harding, died. This was the first death to occur in Clifford township,[46] and the first burial in the cemetery on the hill east of the present Baptist church. Two years later Major Abraham Harding came from Orange County, N. Y., to live with his grandson Amos, and his was the second death to occur in the family after their removal to Clifford, and the second in the town so far as the records show. Before his death in 1806 three more children had been born to Amos and Phoebe Harding, and in the light of present day comforts it is hard to understand how three adults and ten children could live in the small cabin of two rooms and a loft.

Amos Harding bought from time to time all the Miller

[45] This creek is a tributary of the east branch of the Tunkhannock creek. It flows in a northerly direction the whole length of Clifford valley. On an ancient map is it called "Betsey's Brook", but it has borne the name of "The Aldermarsh" since the first settlers came to Clifford. The land of Adam Miller covered the site of the village on the east side of the creek and on the west side it stretched to the edge of lot 38. It appears that he bought directly of John M. Nesbitt, but apparently the Deed was not recorded at Wilkes-Barré as it is not to be found there now.

[46] It has always been believed heretofore, and so stated in all histories of Susquehanna County, that the first death to occur in Clifford was that of Huldah, daughter of Amos Harding. She was not born until four years after the death of Lydia. The above record is from the family bible of Amos Harding and is correct.

ILLUSTRATION (1).

View looking north. Line of trees borders creek. Group of buildings, right foreground, on Callender farm, which was first Adam Miller's, second Amos Harding's and third Nathan Callender's. (1) Old cemetery, (1816). (2) New cemetery.

ILLUSTRATION (2).

View of Clifford Village looking east. Baptist Church at left, main part built 100 years ago. Methodist Church in center. Group of buildings in center foreground, Callender farm house and barns. All the land below the line belonged to the Hardings. (1) Site of first home of Amos Harding. (2) Site of second home of Amos Harding. (3) Barn built by Adam Miller before 1810. (4) Harding cemetery.

land on the east side of the creek; and finally when Mr. Miller decided to move up on the hill west of the valley, Mr. Harding bought the farm on the west side of the creek, giving Mr. Miller the privilege of occupying the cabin, while building his new home on the hill. This farm was somewhat cleared and several acres were under cultivation. Before moving into the Miller cabin in 1812, Mr. Harding added a large room to it, making a very comfortable home. It was the largest cabin for many miles around and had housed the first school taught in the valley, the Miller and Harding children being for several years the only pupils. During Mr. Miller's occupancy, religious services were often held in one of the rooms of this cabin, and the custom was continued after the Hardings moved into it. Mr. Miller built a large frame barn near this cabin which stands to-day (1928) in a good state of preservation, having been in constant use for nearly a century and a quarter. It is the oldest building now standing in Clifford township. (See illustration 2). This second home of Amos Harding stood about fifteen rods in a northeasterly direction from the barn, mentioned above, and between it and the creek.

August 1, 1816, Mr. Harding bought of William E. Robinson between 35 and 36 acres of land on the hill-side south of the valley; consideration, $55.65. This land lay in both Lots 37 and 38, granted to John M. Nesbitt and ran over the county line into Greenfield township. (Deed recorded at Montrose, Pa., Nov. 17, 1818, in Deed Book, No. 3, page 55.) On the same day he bought another tract of Mr. Robinson containing 105 acres in Clifford and Greenfield townships; consideration, $166.00. (Deed recorded at Wilkes-Barré, Jan. 27, 1820, in Deed Book, No. 20, page 120.) December 1, 1816, he bought of Redmond Conyngham, 118 acres, 44 perches of land in Lot 38 (to the west of Lot 37) granted to John M. Nesbitt; consideration, $188.00. (Deed recorded at Wilkes-Barré, June 27, 1820, in Deed Book, No.

21, page 54.) These purchases of land, with what he had bought of Adam Miller, made Amos Harding the possessor of nearly, if not quite, 500 acres in Clifford and Greenfield townships.

The first day of January, 1817, Mr. Harding sold to his son-in-law, James Stearnes, 40 acres of the land lying in Clifford that he had bought of Redmond Conyngham; consideration, $100.00. The witnesses to this Deed were M. R. Harding and Tryon Harding. (Recorded at Wilkes-Barré, April 27, 1819, in Deed Book, No. 20, page 50.) He sold to his son, Tryon Harding (Deed and date not found), between six and seven acres of the northern end of the Conyngham tract. Tryon Harding sold this land to Jacob Bedford, September 2, 1822; consideration, $60.00 (Recorded at Montrose, Pa., in Deed Book, No. 5, page 319.) Jacob Bedford afterward sold this to Nathan Callender, date, December 1, 1824; consideration, $48.00. (Recorded at Montrose, Dec. 1, 1824, in Deed Book, No. 5, page 320.) It is still included in what is known as the Callender Farm.

Amos Harding sold to James Finn, October 15, 1818, 112 acres of the 141 that he had bought of William E. Robinson; consideration, $1900.00 (Recorded at Montrose, Nov. 17, 1818, in Deed Book, No. 3, page 53.) December 1, 1824, James Finn and wife Polly deeded this land to Nathan Callender; consideration, $2500.00 (Recorded at Montrose, in Deed Book, No. 5, page 317.) None of this land is now included in the Callender farm. When and to whom it was sold by Callender is not now known, but it covered the southern part of the village and also the farm for many years owned and occupied by John Halsted now the property (1928) of Emery G. Greene. By changes in the county line after the date of the survey of this land as described in the Deed, all of it now lies in Clifford township.

June 1, 1820, Amos Harding sold to Nathan Callender 223 acres of land, "excepting 46 acres previously deeded to James

Stearnes and Tryon Harding", as the Deed reads; consideration, $1500.00; witnesses, James Finn and Harly Hobbs. (Recorded at Wilkes-Barré in Deed Book, No. 21, page 55.) Most, perhaps all, of the 177 acres of this tract that went to Mr. Callender was the Adam Miller farm which Mr. Harding had bought in 1810. Mr. Callender lived in Dundaff and never occupied the farm himself.[47] Mr. Harding continued to live upon it until his removal to Ohio. It is evident that the remainder of the land bought by Mr. Harding in Clifford was sold to members of his family, but no records of sales are now to be found with one exception, viz.: the sale of 20 acres of the land bought of William E. Robinson, to his son Salmon E. Harding *before* the 26th of October, 1818, upon which date the said Salmon E. Harding sold it to George Oram. (Deed recorded at Montrose in Deed Book, No. 3, page 580.) This land "by sundry mentioned conveyances" (so reads a subsequent Deed) became the property of Henry Cuddeback. It is upon this land that the Harding burial ground on the hill east of the Baptist Church lies; and, because of certain restrictions imposed upon the owners relating to the preservation of said burial plot, some trouble of a legal nature arose. Therefore, on September 4, 1829, Amos and Phoebe Harding, then living in Richland Co., Ohio, gave a deed to Henry Cuddeback for this land, consideration fifty cents, to make good said Cuddeback's title. (Deed recorded at Montrose, Dec. 1, 1829, in Deed Book, No. 7, page 429.) Phoebe Harding signed this deed with a mark.

A curious and unexplainable transaction between Amos Harding and three of his sons was recorded at Montrose May 1, 1815, in Deed Book, No. 1, page 454. It reads: "This Indenture made and concluded this first day of April,

[47] Nathan Callender died in 1830 and his widow then removed from Dundaff to her farm in Clifford. It had evidently been rented after Mr. Harding left it, and at one time was occupied by a Mr. Mackey. J. M. Callender, son of Nathan, inherited it and in turn it descended to his daughter, now deceased, whose husband, Eugene Kennedy, now (1928) occupies it.

A. D. 1815, between Salmon E. Harding, Mordica Harding and Ebenezer S. Harding all of Clifford, Susquehanna County and State of Pennsylvania, of the first part and Amos Harding and his wife of the second part, WITNESSETH, that Whereas the said Amos Harding hath this day deeded all his property both real and personal to the said parties of the first part in consideration of the support and maintenance of himself and wife during their life time and the support and maintenance of the young children until the ages of fourteen years in consequence of the said Deeds and for the consideration of the personal property. We do lease and set over unto the said Amos Harding and to his wife during their life time all the said property in Clifford whereon we now live which was deeded by the said Amos Harding by deeds bearing even date herewith the said Amos to enter into and take possession of the said premises at any time when he shall think meet or his wife if she outlives her husband has the same privileges the said Amos has, during her lifetime. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals the day and year first above written. (Signed) S. E. Harding. Mordeca Harding. E. S. Harding. Acknowledged before A. Dimock, Justice. April 25, 1815."

Amos Harding and Adam Miller were among the heaviest tax payers in Clifford through the years up to and including 1813.[48] By that time many settlers had come into the township, but few had made their homes in Clifford valley.[49] Amos Harding and Adam Miller appear to have worked

[48] "Assessment of 1804 in Nicholson Township, Luzerne County. Amos Hardin, 18 acres improved land, $72. One house, $7. 7 horses and cattle, $76." Some of the 18 acres were improved when Amos Harding bought of Adam Miller, and a good sized apple orchard had been started.

[49] Among these few settlers in Clifford valley was Isaac Tripp. His father and the father of Phoebe, wife of Amos Harding, were half brothers. Isaac Tripp was a son of Job and Hannah (Rice) Tripp of the Wyoming Valley. He was 5th in descent from John and Mary (Paine) Tripp of Portsmouth, R. I., the line being John, Job, Job, Jr., Isaac, Job, Isaac of this sketch. In his youth he was captured by the

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together in the promotion of every enterprise for the betterment of the little community. They were instrumental in building in 1814 the first school house which stood upon, or very near the site of the present village school house; and they laid out and built the first road in Clifford. It led from their cabins in the valley over the hill to the southwest, past what in after years was known as the "Tinker farm". This road has long been abandoned. Amos Harding was one of the five "managers" (for soliciting funds?) of the Milford and Owego Turnpike and was undoubtedly a subscriber and share-holder. (Centennial history of Susquehanna County, page 48.)

Mr. Harding was active in the organization of the Clifford Baptist Church and one of its first members. This church was organized October 20, 1817, in the school house at Clifford mentioned above. It became one of the churches in the Abington Baptist Association. For some unknown reason Amos Harding was not one of the original thirty-four members although we find the names of his wife, three sons and wives of two on that list; but at the second Covenant meeting of the church, held December 20, 1817, he and his daughter Abigail, wife of James Stearnes, were admitted to membership on "experience". The day before, December 19th, an important church meeting had been held at Mr. Harding's house where much interesting business was transacted. The Abington Baptist Association met with the Clifford Church on Wednesday, September 6, 1820, the meetings being held in a new unused barn belonging to Salmon E. Harding. The delegates were entertained at dinner at the home of Amos Harding, but he was not present being called to Ohio on business. There is a tradition long remembered in Clifford,

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Indians in Providence township, and remained a prisoner in Canada until after the close of the Revolution. He married Eleanor Frear and their descendants for two or three generations lived in Clifford, but the family is now extinct. Isaac Tripp was one of the 34 original members of the Clifford Baptist Church and was afterward a deacon of this church.

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that Mr. Harding, being anxious that the food served at the dinner should be of the best, left a ten dollar bill (a large sum in those days) with his wife with strict orders that the butter especially, should be of the best quality, "for", said he, "if the bread is not just right, if the butter be good it might do very well". He occasionally preached in Clifford and other places. He preached at Bethany, Wayne County, Pa., in 1819, at a meeting of the Baptist Association, using for his text the words, "Blessed are the pure in heart". He also conducted the funeral service for his little daughter Huldah, who died in 1808, and according to the custom of the time preached a sermon. This child who was only four years old was drowned in a spring a few rods east of the Harding cabin. This was undoubtedly where the family got its drinking water for they had walled the spring from the bottom. Huldah leaned over the top of the wall and fell in.[50] Another child, Jemima, born in 1810, died in Clifford in childhood. Joseph, born in 1811, died in 1813.[51]

Four children of Amos and Phoebe Harding were buried in the plot on the hillside, and with the grandfather and first wife of Tryon Harding there are six graves of the family there. To recapitulate, the names and dates of deaths of these Hardings are:

1. Lydia Harding, died in September, 1800.
2. Major Abraham Harding, died in 1806.
3. Huldah Harding, died in 1808.
4. Jemima Harding, died in 1811.
5. Joseph Harding, died in October, 1813.
6. Anna (Roberts) Harding, first wife of Tryon Harding, died July 20, 1815.

When the newer cemetery was laid out in the northern end of the valley in 1816, some of the graves in this little burial ground were moved to it; but the Harding graves were left

[50] This spring is at the foot of the hill back of the Baptist Church.

[51] "Joseph Harding, son of Amos Harding, died at Clifford, Pa., October, 1813." From notices of deaths published in the Susquehanna Democrat of Wilkes-Barré. (See Wyoming Historical and Geological Society's Proceedings, Vol. 10, page 175.)

undisturbed. They remain there to-day, with no stones or marks of any kind to show their exact location. Half a century ago the last vestige of a mound was leveled by the ruthless plow.[52]

The exact time of the removal of Amos Harding from Clifford to Ohio is a matter of dispute. He was taxed in Clifford for the last time in 1819 and he sold his homestead property to Nathan Callender in June, 1820; but it is certain that he was still living there in September of that year and neighborhood tradition names a still later date for his removal. The weight of evidence, however, favors late 1820 or early 1821 as the true date. The records of the Clifford Baptist Church for the years between 1818 and 1828 are lost, but in 1830 it is recorded that Amos Harding and his wife had previously (no date given) been dismissed by letter.

Amos Harding must have been a man of strong character to make so lasting an impression upon a community as he did upon Clifford. There are aged people still living who remember the anecdotes and traditions concerning him which were told to them by his contemporaries. By the aid of these stories, we picture him as a high-spirited man of an adventurous nature, stern, unbending in matters affecting his convictions of right and justice, with strong religious beliefs, a "Hard-shell Baptist" of the old school, a shrewd and prosperous business man but generous and kind in his dealings with his family and neighbors. It is to be regretted that Clifford lost so early in its history this sturdy pioneer. In his western home he repeated the history of his activities in Clifford, and he died there an honored and respected citizen.

Children of Amos and Phoebe (Tripp) Harding; nine

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[52] This burial-ground on the farm of Amos Harding, was used by the community and there were at least twelve burials there, some say more. The last burial on the hill was that of John Robinson, father of William E. Robinson, and the first burial in the newer cemetery was that of Eleanor (Nicholson) Miller, wife of Adam Miller, who died in March, 1816.

born at Pittston, Luzerne Co., Pa., and eight at Clifford, Susquehanna Co., Pa.

1. Abigail Harding, born May 14, 1785; died Sept. 3, 1861; married at Clifford, Pa., Dec. 25, 1802, James Stearnes (born at Attleboro, Mass., Aug. 5, 1779; died in Ohio, May 5, 1837.) He was a son of Joseph and Rhoda (Tingley) Stearnes. (See "The Tingley family", by R. M. Tingley, p. 86.) They had ten children, eight born in Clifford and two in Ohio.
2. Lydia Harding, born in 1788; died at Clifford in Sept., 1800.
3. George Tryon Harding (more later).
4. William Tripp Harding, born July 15, 1792; died Feb. 8, 1884; married first, at Clifford, Pa., in 1811, Minerva Martindale, who was either killed by wild beasts or carried off by Indians soon after her marriage. (See "The Hardings in America", p. 133). He married second, in Ohio, Dec. 8, 1823, Mary Otis (born March 31, 1787; died Dec. 4, 1865.) They had five children.
5. Ruami Harding, born in 1793; died at Pittston, Pa., in 1799.
6. Salmon (or Solomon) E. Harding, born Jan. 31, 1794; died at Galion, Ohio, Feb. 7, 1872; married first, at Clifford, Pa., in 1815, Anna Wheat (born March 28, 1795; died Sept. 5, 1836.) They had eight children. He married second, in 1837, Eliza Lathrop. They had one child. He married third, Susan Mason. In Clifford he lived near the school house and was active in all church affairs. He signed his name Salmon while he lived in Clifford and it is so written in the church record. He organized the Bethel Baptist Church in Richland Co., Ohio, and was for many years its pastor.
7. Mordecai Rice Harding, born Nov. 18, 1795; died in Ohio, March 21, 1870; married at Clifford, Pa., Sept. 18, 1817, Susannah (Baker) Newton, daughter of 'Ebenezer Baker and widow of Thomas Newton. Mordecai and Susannah had nine children. After her death he married, Jan. 15, 1852, Martha Steele, who survived him. He was for fifty years a deacon of the Blooming Grove, Ohio, Baptist Church, and is buried in the old cemetery in that village.

8. Welthy Harding, born March 15, 1797; died August 19, 1886; married first, at Clifford, Pa., Nov. 6, 1814, Joseph Baker (born Aug. 30, 1788; died Jan. 8, 1834) a son of Ebenezer Baker. They lived in the part of Clifford township now called Elkdale, three miles from Clifford village. They had nine children. She married second, in Ohio, Jan. 24, 1835, Hiram Wells (died Jan. 24, 1885). They had four children.
9. Ebenezer Slocum Harding, born Aug. 23, 1798; died April 22, 1882; married first, in Ohio, June 21, 1821, Mary Webster (born April 3, 1801; died April 28, 1844.) She had eleven children. He married second, June 8, 1845, Naoma Wilson. She had two children. He was an "Old School Baptist" preacher.
10. Benjamin Franklin Harding, the first child of Amos and Phoebe Harding born in Clifford. Born Aug. 6, 1802; died April 3, 1838; married in Ohio, in 1824, Anna Jackson (born 1800; died 1890.) They had five children. He was a member of the "Old School Baptist" Church and often officiated as pastor.
11. Huldah Harding, born in Clifford in 1804; died there in 1808.
12. Hilah Harding, born April 10, 1805; died Sept. 13, 1877; married in Ohio, Oct. 21, 1821, Amos G. Webster (born March 31, 1799; died Jan. 27, 1879.) They had eight children.
13. John Harding, born July 11, 1807; died April 22, 1884; married, Feb. 10, 1830, Elvira Dunham (born in 1812; died in April, 1889.) He went with his parents to Ohio and lived in Richland County until 1834 when he removed to LaPorte County, Indiana. John and Elvira Harding had ten children. He was a wagon maker by trade and a farmer.
14. Chauncey C. Harding, born Jan. 14, 1809; died in Huron County, Ohio, Dec. 8, 1880; married, Feb. 22, 1830, Rachel Story (born Jan. 22, 1809; died March 10, 1869.) After his marriage he settled in Marion County, Ohio. He and his wife had six children.
15. Jemima Harding, born at Clifford, Pa., in 1810; died there in 1811.
16. Joseph Harding, born at Clifford, Pa., in 1811; died there in Oct., 1813.

17. Mahala Harding, born at Clifford, Pa., June 25, 1813; died in Harrison Co., Missouri, Feb. 26, 1904; married in Richland County, Ohio, Oct. 19, 1834, Richard L. Field (born May 24, 1808; died Nov. 8, 1892.) They had fourteen children.

All the children of Amos Harding settled in Ohio. Mordecai was the first to go. In July, 1818, he and his wife went to Richland County and remained two years, when, the Indians becoming so hostile they feared for their safety, they returned to Clifford and stayed a year. In 1821 they went back to Ohio, their parents and others of the family accompanying them.

George Tryon Harding, oldest son of Amos and Phoebe Harding, was born at Pittston, Luzerne County, Pa., June 15, 1790, and died at Blooming Grove, Morrow County, Ohio, January 9, 1860. He married first, at Clifford, Pa., Anna (or Ella) Roberts who died July 20, 1815. They had two daughters:

1. Huldah Harding, born May 7, 1813; died May 27, 1898; married in 1831, Abraham Logan and had ten children.
2. Phoebe Ann Harding, born May 11, 1815; died in 1898; married in 1833, William Boyce and had ten children.

Mr. Harding married second, Elizabeth Madison, who was born July 26, 1800, and died Feb. 8, 1886. She was a daughter of William and Mary (Hooker) Madison.[53] Tryon Harding (as he is called in all records of him in Clifford, and

[53] The Madison genealogy as given in "The Hardings in America" is as follows: John (1605-1690) came from England to Virginia in 1670; Thomas (b. Eng. 1632—d. 1698); Joseph (1672-1763); Joseph (1701-1773); John (1729-1803), a Baptist preacher; William (1776-1840), mar. Mary Hooker; Elizabeth, mar. George Tryon Harding. The story told on page 128 of the book quoted, that John Madison, grandfather of Elizabeth, organized the first Baptist Church in Susquehanna County, Pa., is not supported by history. It must have been a church in a county adjacent to Susquehanna.

apparently also by his family) and his wife Elizabeth were two of the 34 original members of the Clifford Baptist Church. Her name is written "Betsy" on the church roll. They were both subsequently dismissed by letter, date unknown. Nothing of a legal nature is recorded of Tryon Harding in Pennsylvania with the exception of the purchase and sale of six acres of land on the western side of Clifford valley. The story of these transactions has already been told in the sketch of his father. It is very improbable that this is the only land he owned in Clifford, or that he resided upon it for there is no tradition of a house ever standing upon this steep hillside. So far as known it has always been covered, as it is to-day, by a woods with thick undergrowth.

Tryon Harding was the last of his family to leave Clifford, the date of his departure as given in "The Hardings in America" being 1822. In Ohio he eventually became the possessor of the original farm purchased there by his father, Amos Harding, which is still owned by Tryon's descendants. He appears to have prospered financially in his Ohio home. He is buried beside his father in the Blooming Grove cemetery.

The children of George Tryon and Elizabeth Harding, all born at Clifford, Pa., were:

1. William Oliver Perry Harding, born June 20, 1818; died March 28, 1901; married in 1839, Isabenda McGowan (born Dec. 27, 1815; died April 28, 1898). They had six children.
2. Charles Alexander Harding. (More later).
3. Mary Miranda Harding, born Jan. 30, 1822; died Sept. 25, 1888; married, May 20, 1840, Marcus W. Bennett. They had eight children.

Charles Alexander Harding, son of George Tryon and Elizabeth (Madison) Harding and grandfather of President Warren Gamaliel Harding, was born at Clifford, Pa., April 8, 1820, two years before his parents removed to Blooming Grove, Ohio. May 28, 1840, he married Mary Ann Craw-

ford, who was born August 26, 1823, and died March 11, 1895. She was a daughter of Joshua and Sophia Crawford. He inherited from his father the farm that Amos Harding owned and resided upon at Blooming Grove, Ohio, and was a successful farmer. He was an active member of the Blooming Grove Baptist Church, the land upon which it stands being donated by him. He also gave the land upon which stands the Blooming Grove school house. He died April 3, 1878, and is buried in the Blooming Grove cemetery beside his father and grandfather. The children of Charles Alexander and Mary Ann (Crawford) Harding were:

1. Phoebe A. Harding, born April 21, 1841; died April 8, 1912; married Oct. 1860, Thomas Mitchell and had one child that died in infancy.
2. Sophia Harding, born Nov. 1, 1842; died Nov. 17, 1909; married first, Dec. 18, 1858, Simon Ayres Numbers and had three children. She married second, Daniel V. Miller.
3. George Tryon Harding, M. D. (More later).
4. Elizabeth Harding, born April 27, 1846; died Sept. 2, 1852.
5. Mary Matilda Harding, born June 30, 1849; died March, 1850.
6. Lydia Frances Harding, born March 14, 1852; married, Oct. 3, 1871, Mr. Wyant and had three children.
7. Margaret Caroline Harding, married, Nov. 30, 1872, Daniel Marshman, and had four children.
8. Catherine Harding, born and died in 1857.
9. Sarah Eleanor Harding, born August 30, 1858; married, Dec. 25, 1874, Albert Wheeler Dickerson who died in 1919. They had one child.

George Tryon Harding, M. D., only son of Charles Alexander Harding, was born June 12, 1844. He married first, May 7, 1864, at Galion, Ohio, Phoebe Elizabeth Dickerson (born in 1843; died May 20, 1910), daughter of Isaac Haines and Charity Malvina (Van Kirk) Dickerson,[54] natives of

[54] The Van Kirk family is descended from Joseph Van Kirk of New Jersey, who had seven sons in the Revolutionary War. Three of these sons settled in Washington County, Pa., after peace was de-

Washington County, Pa. Dr. Harding is a Civil War Veteran and in 1884 served as Surgeon General of the National G. A. R. He graduated from the Cleveland Homeopathic Medical College in 1873 and has practiced his profession in Caledonia and Marion, Ohio. He is a member of the Baptist Church and in politics is a Republican. August 11, 1921, he married second, Alice Severns. He resides at Marion, Ohio.

The children of George Tryon and Phoebe E. (Dickerson) Harding are.[55]

1. Warren Gamaliel Harding, President of the United States, born Nov. 1, 1865; died August 2, 1923. He married Florence Kling, who died Nov. 21, 1924. They had no children.
2. Charity M. Harding.
3. Mary Clarissa Harding.
4. Eleanor P. Harding.
5. Charles Alexander Harding (born 1874; died 1878).
6. Abigail Victoria Harding.
7. George Tryon Harding, Jr., M. D.
8. Phoebe Caroline Harding.

Members of the Clifford Baptist Church, who were of the Amos Harding family:

1. Tryon Harding. (Name written Hartin).
2. Salmon E. Harding.
3. Mordecai Harding. (Name written Mordaue).
4. Phebe Harding. (Wife of Amos Harding).
5. Betsy Harding. (Wife of Tryon Harding).
6. Susannah Harding. (Wife of Mordecai Harding).
7. Joseph Baker. (Husband of Welthy Harding).
8. Welthy Baker. (Wife of Joseph Baker and daughter of Amos Harding. Her name written "Petty" Baker on the church roll; evidently a nick-name).

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clared. One of these, William Van Kirk, married Deborah Watters and had five sons and five daughters. One daughter was Charity (1803-1878), who married Isaac Haines Dickerson and they migrated to Blooming Grove, Ohio. Their daughter, Phoebe, married Dr. George Tryon Harding.

[55] The records of these children are given in detail in "The Hardings in America".

The above names are found in the list of 34 original members. Those below were admitted to membership within a few weeks after the organization of the church.

9. William Harding.
10. Amos Harding.
11. Anna Harding. (Wife of Salmon E. Harding).
12. Abigail Stearnes. (Daughter of Amos Harding and wife of James Stearnes. Name written Starns).

All were dismissed by letter, but dates not given.

The names Lydia Harding and Amy Harding are also found upon the church roll as original members. They were not of the Amos Harding family, but probably lived in the part of Clifford later set off to Herrick township where a Luke Harding settled.

The purpose of this article, which is to tell the story of the ancestors of President Warren G. Harding, who lived in Luzerne and Susquehanna Counties, Pa., properly ends with the migration of the Amos Harding family to Ohio; but the following facts concerning the village of Blooming Grove, Ohio, and the Baptist Church there, both founded by Amos Harding and his sons, seem to belong with the narrative. We are indebted to George Tryon Harding, Jr., M. D., brother of President Harding, who, upon request, very kindly furnished what follows. We quote from his letter:

"Blooming Grove in North Bloomfield Township, Morrow County, Ohio, had the name of Corsica for its postoffice for many years, but with the coming of rural delivery, that postoffice went out of existence, and the town is still Blooming Grove. It is served by rural delivery from Galion, a town of nine or ten thousand inhabitants, five miles away. It has about 100 inhabitants and there is a Methodist Church with a resident pastor and a Seventh-day Adventist Church with its local elder, both of which organizations are active. The first Baptist church in the community was located at the corners about one mile north of Blooming Grove on the

original farm owned by the Hardings. In 1865 an attempt was made to move it to the village, but it was too frail and was left on a piece of land owned by one of the Hardings about one-fourth of a mile from the village." (Dr. Harding does not say so, but from what follows it appears that this church building was abandoned when they failed to move it to the village.) He continues:

"In 1871 the present brick building (church) was built on land donated by my grandfather, Charles Alexander Harding, the same being a portion of the part of the original farm of George Tryon Harding that was left to his son Charles Alexander at his death. It is located about five hundred feet north of the intersection of the highways marking the location of Blooming Grove . . . and is at the very edge of the village. It stands upon the site of a former frame church" (which was probably the first church in the village, we gather from other remarks in the letter.) "A little way north (from this church) and on the west side of the same road, is the village cemetery originally donated by Solomon Harding . . . This Solomon Harding, sometimes called Salmon, was one of the original settlers in this community and is credited with having been a local preacher, and is also said to have erected the little frame church located about two and a half miles northwest of Blooming Grove and two and a half miles from Galion, which was for many years occupied by the so called Hard-shelled Baptists." We learn from this that Amos Harding and his sons covered a large stretch of country with their holdings of real estate; and that the different members of the family organized three different Baptist churches in Morrow County instead of one as we had supposed.

In speaking further of the village church erected in 1871, Dr. Harding says: "The congregation disbanded in 1912. It was then a member of the Mansfield Baptist Association, and the last pastor was Rev. Cunningham. There is no Baptist

church in Blooming Grove now but there is one in Galion. I purchased this Blooming Grove Baptist Church on December 5, 1925, from five men duly elected and qualified as acting trustees of the Mansfield Baptist Association, the governing body having charge of the interests of the Baptist churches located in Morrow, Crawford, Richland and Ashland counties. They were authorized by order of the Court of Common Pleas of Morrow County . . . to sell the premises of the Regular Baptist Church of Blooming Grove, Morrow County, Ohio, a religious society incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, which society had become extinct. On the 28th day of December, 1925, I gave a deed of lease to L. O. Harding, Benn Stevens, and E. E. Dickerson, the former two being descendants of Amos Harding, of Pennsylvania, and all of them being my relatives and living with their families and conducting farming enterprises in that community, and they were to use it for the benefit of the community. The chief use it has been put to thus far has been as a place for athletic activities of the members of the local junior high school.

"I have heard my father speak of the interest that his grandparents took in religious and educational matters and of the efforts that they put forth in behalf of promoting these things in the new pioneer community. The early settlers came when the country was still visited frequently by Indians who had given up their ownership of the land by the Greeneville treaty which went into effect in 1819. I have heard father tell how they usually kept a young steer to fatten up for the meetings of the Baptist Association, so that they might extend hospitality to all who came to attend, and how delighted they were to entertain their fellow Baptists on such occasions at the home of his father."

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